

# Peculiarities of using shrines in Fergana Valley for the Purpose of Tourism

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## ABSTRACT

This article describes the role and significance of shrines in developing pilgrimage tourism industry. The essence of shrines impact to the economy of the country is also disclosed. This article encourages foreign tourist and native to learn and stay informed. In particular, the importance shrines for today are emphasized. The article reveals that pilgrimage tourism is the type of tourism that entirely or powerfully motivates tourists for the achievement of religious attitude and practices. Pilgrimage tourism is one of the oldest types of visiting the attractions and a global experience in the olden times of spiritual growth.

**Keywords:** tourism sector, pilgrimage, potential, religion, tourism image, shrines, founders or saints, missionary, "Travel on the ways of Islam", places of worship, religious tourism, spiritual awakening.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pilgrimage tourism is the type of tourism that entirely or powerfully motivates tourists for the achievement of religious attitude and practices. One of the oldest types of visiting the attractions and a global experience in the olden times of spiritual growth, it can be differentiated into different forms.

Pilgrimages frequently involve a journey or search of moral or spiritual significance. Typically, it is a journey to a shrine or other location of importance to a person's beliefs and faith, although sometimes it can be a metaphorical journey into someone's own beliefs.

Religious tourism, also commonly referred to as faith tourism<sup>1</sup>, is a type of tourism, where people travel individually or in groups for pilgrimage, missionary, or leisure (fellowship) purposes.

Many religious tourists attach spiritual importance to particular sites: the place of birth or death of founders or saints, or to the place of their "calling" or spiritual awakening, or of their connection (visual or verbal) with the divine, to locations where miracles were performed or witnessed, or locations where a deity is said to live or be "housed", or any site that is seen to have special spiritual powers.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Although no definitive study has been completed on worldwide religious tourism, some segments of the industry have been measured:

- According to the World Tourism Organization, an estimated 300 to 330 million pilgrims visit the world's key religious sites every year.
- According to the U.S. Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, Americans traveling overseas for "religious or pilgrimage" purposes has increased from 491,000 travelers in 2002 to 633,000 travelers in 2005 (30% increase).

<sup>1</sup> Gannon, Martin Joseph; Baxter, Ian W. F.; Collinson, Elaine; Curran, Ross; Farrington, Thomas; Glasgow, Steven; Godsman, Elliot M.; Gori, Keith; Jack, Gordon R. A. (11 June 2017). "Travelling for Umrah: destination attributes, destination image, and post-travel intentions" (PDF). *The Service Industries Journal*. 37 (7–8): 448–465. doi:10.1080/02642069.2017.1333601. ISSN 0264-2069

- Religious attractions including Sight & Sound Theatre attracts 800,000 visitors a year while the Holy Land Experience and Focus on the Family Welcome Center each receives about 250,000 guests annually.

Shrines are places or containers of religious presence. The English word *shrine* is derived from the Latin *scrinium*, meaning a box or receptacle. The shrine is the receptacle within the material world for the religious association that believers experience when they come into the presence of these receptacles. Many shrines are unambiguously religious, linking events, persons, and places central to religious traditions. Mecca (Saudi Arabia), Jerusalem (Israel), Canterbury (United Kingdom), Nara (Japan), and Varanasi (or Benares, India) are sites that immediately come to mind as centers of religious density, hosting many places of sacred value to various religious communities. Other shrines may be more open-ended, not tied to particular religious traditions but linked strongly to a particular regional or national identity<sup>2</sup>.

Pilgrimage tourism is one of the most profitable sectors of tourism industry. We can see that the Republic of Uzbekistan has a great potential for the development of this tourism sector. Especially, Fergana Valley has a great potential not only for its recreational opportunities but also for the development of other tourism sectors. In particular, the presence of more than 400 pilgrims in Fergana Valley is a guarantee for the development of this sector. All the pilgrimages to Fergana Valley and the East Turkestan region will be explored by Japanese company “Ford” within the framework of the project “Nara Silk Road”. As a result, it noted that the number of pilgrims in Fergana Valley and the contribution of scholars to the development of religious education were greater than that of the scholars of Samarkand and Bukhara.<sup>3</sup> In addition, by the initiative of UNESCO in 1994 within the framework of the project “Great Silk Road” the culture, traditions and values of Fergana Valley were explored on the concept of tourism development.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. MAIN PART

The development of pilgrimage tourism in Fergana Valley plays an important role in enhancing tourism potential of the region and shaping tourism image. However, it must be recognized that many of the sacred sites in Fergana Valley are related to the early advent of Islam. KhojaiTurob shrine in the village of Bogish in Dangara district of Fergana region can be used as a tourism brand in the region, but cannot be recognized as tourism brand. Initially, this shrine is attributed to Imam Muhammad Baqir. Sources say that Imam Baqir (676-74) was born in Medina and was buried in Medina, this is a symbolic shrine. Furthermore, the use of this shrine in the development of foreign tourism can lead to differences between tourists and visitors with religious and secular knowledge. It is more desirable to use this place only for the development of local tourism.

Currently, if we look at the experience of pilgrimage tourism, it is common to sanctify Buddhist objects in Buddhism and in Christian areas; the sanctification of object connected to the name of Jesus Christ is commonplace, while in Islam with the name of Muhammad. In particular, in Fergana Valley we can find the places where the Prophet's hair is kept, in Margilan and Kokand shrines. Although such sacred items are mostly kept in Pakistan, India, Iran and Turkey, such items have already been imported into Central Asia since IX-X. Muvi Mubarak shrine in Kokand city was formed during the reign of Kokand khan Muhammad Ali Khan. At that time served as one of khan's residences. Nowadays, the shrine has lost its original shape and has to be repaired. The attraction of industry can only be enhanced by the development of tourism through the organization of theatrical performances of Muhammad Ali Khan, Khudayarhon period, and folk games, in order to use this shrine to shape tourism image. As, the things related to the name of the Prophet have not been saved till our time.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Shrine. thefreedictionary.com

<sup>3</sup>FSA. 1160 - list, list 1, volume 5, 8 pages.

<sup>4</sup>FSA. 1160 - list, 1 - list, 8 - folder, page 18.

<sup>5</sup>FSA. 1141 - list, 1 - list, 48 - folder, page 1.

There is a pilgrimage site named after SayidBattal Ghazi in Uchkuprik district of Fergana region, who was killed in 739 during the Byzantium war and was buried in Rome. However, there are numerous pilgrimages to his name in Central Asia, including Fergana Valley. Many of these places of worship have been associated with the use of the name of Islamic propagandists, especially because of the prestige of the descendants of Hazrat Ali. The shrine is not intended to be used directly to enhance the attractiveness of foreign tourism, also the large number of tourist destinations around the country can lead to misunderstandings, but only organizing route "Travel on the ways of Islam" can be used to shape the image of foreign tourism.<sup>6</sup>

It should be noted that there are many places of worship in the country which are related to women. With a focus on world tourism experience, we can also see women's names in Buddhism and Christianity. Similar places of worship are common in Islamic world. Mushkulkishod Mausoleum in Fergana Valley, SafedBoulon (Namangan), ZuraykMomo and BibiUbayda are among the most popular places in Fergana Valley. BibiUbayda is the daughter of Caravanbos, the ruler of the Ungar country, and is married to Islamic propagandist Sa'dibnUsman due to political circumstances. BibiUbaydah has a son named Shah Fayz. He had a son named Shah Jarir.

There is also a Baba Qambar shrine in the village of Faiziabad of Altyaryk district, although it is believed that the ancestor of Hazrat Ali's grandfather, BoboKambar, was buried in Kufa. The popularity of Hazrat Ali in the Islamic world led to the popularity of Baba Kambar. BoboKambar has also been referred to as a sponsor of thunder and rain. The Turkic, the Kyrgyz and the Uighurs people regarded BoboKambar as the patron of the horsemen, while the Turkmen regarded them as patrons of the singers. So the shrines associated with Baba Kambar are known as one of the most visited shrines in Islamic world.

There is also a cousin of Khazrat Ali's cousinBoboAhtam in Altyaryk district, and BoboAhtam has considered as brave man. Although the original shrine of HazratAhtam was actually located in Balkh, we can see a number of symbolic pilgrimages in different regions because of strong respect for Hazrat Ali. In this district, we also see pilgrimages to the names of Hazrat Ali's sons. The Khurasan Khan shrine in the village of Burbaliq is related to the occupation of Khurasan, which died 700 years, and the name of Muhammad Hanafia, who converted the population to Islam. Due to the large number of pilgrimages in his name in Fergana Valley, it was caused to establish other shrines like KhojaIlgar, Imam Ata, and Stone Fathers.

#### 4. DISCUSSIONS

In the village of Shohimardon in Fergana district, there is the most famous pilgrimage site in Fergana Valley, named after Hazrat Ali. The Khazrat Ali shrine in Shahimardan is the bouquet of Fergana Valley pilgrimage, as is the BohouddinNaqshbandi shrine in Bukhara, as is Polvonota pilgrimage shrine in Khiva. The existing shrine was rebuilt in 1993 by SayyidAkbaralihon, the son of the master of Margilan, Amanullahan, and IsakjonAhunov. Also Shahimardon sanctified by fifty-pound stone associated with the name of Hazrat Ali, and in front of Hazrat Ali the camel-related stone to the camel that carried his coffin. There is also a pilgrimage to the fourth generation of Hazrat Ali Talib Shah. Talib Shah erected the first tomb of Hazrat Ali in Fergana. There is also a shrine in the village of Shahimardon, named after Hazrat Ali's tent man, Omar Ummiya. Aksu Tomb Cemetery is named after Hazrat Ali's white camel. It is believed that Beshpanjawas cut off by Hazrat Ali's sword. There is a legend that Hazrat Ali's shrine was situated in a cave on the mountain of Shahimardan. In Yordon village, Khazrat Ali's coffin is seen as a sacred place of worship by people as the first place of the camel's knee.<sup>7</sup>

The Muvi Mubarak Pilgrimage, named after the Prophet Muhammad in Margilan, has shown great love, devotion and faith to prophets during Islamic celebrations and spiritual gatherings of people. Before Blessed hair, people have been able to re-learn the history of the Prophet, his memories, and his religious knowledge. He inspired the poets to create wonderful speeches.

<sup>6</sup>FSA. 1160 - list, 1 - list, 6 - folder, page 6

<sup>7</sup>FSA. 1160 - list, 1-list, Volume 6, page 148.

## 5. RESULTS

One of the main reasons for the popularity of Shah Mansur and Nosirshah shrines, in Yormaduz of Marghilan where Arab warriors, led by Quutaybaibn Muslim, have come to Fergana Valley to promote Islam were buried is directly attributed to Hazrat Ali's grandson. Shah Mansur shrine is not a mausoleum, but a real tomb. Many generations of Hazrat Ali migrated to Central Asia as a result of the persecution of the Prophet's descendants during the Hajjaj bin Yusuf's period. At the same time, there were more pilgrimage places in Fergana Valley connected with the name of Hazrat Ali.

The KhojaMa'az pilgrimage in Yoyilmaof Margilan was erected to Ma'ad bin Jabal one of the scholars of the Prophet Muhammad. Although he died in 640 and did not come to Movarounnahr, the shrines associated with his name are located in Khorezm region and Fergana Valley.

## 6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, there are numerous pilgrimage sites in Fergana Valley related to the spread of Islam, which are important for the development of pilgrimage tourism. It is also important in the study of Islamic history. This problematic issue requires an in-depth study of shrines of Fergana Valley.

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